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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/695,107	10/24/2003	Jeffrey D. Sutherland		4835
7590	08/07/2008		EXAMINER	
MICHAEL G. VIEIRA 36 MACDONALD DRIVE NASHUA, NH 03062			KING, ANITA M	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3632		
		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
		08/07/2008	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/695,107	<b>Applicant(s)</b> SUTHERLAND ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b> Anita M. King	<b>Art Unit</b> 3632

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 April 2008.

2a) This action is FINAL.      2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,8 and 9 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1, 8, and 9 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/DS/02)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

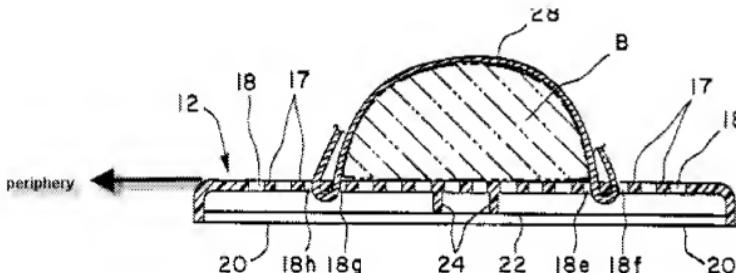
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application  
 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

This is the eighth office action for application number 10/695,107, Carrier for Various-Sized Articles Operatively Supported by a Vehicle, filed on October 24, 2003.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,881,477 to Watson. Watson discloses an apparatus (10) capable of supporting one or more articles of various sizes and shapes on an vehicle surface during transport with a mechanized vehicle, the apparatus comprising: one or more straps (28, 47, 50); a planar platform (12) having a body and a periphery (see Fig. below) and cooperating with one or more straps for holding the one or more article against the platform; a planar bottom surface parallel to the top surface for engaging the surface; one or more handles (20), protruding from and in substantially close proximity to the periphery, for grasping the platform; a plurality of bearing members (surfaces between the slots, 18) arranged in succession to enable adjustment of one or more straps; a plurality of slots (18) separating bearing members; and at least one recess (section between ribs 22), aligned with the plurality of slots and the bearing members, recessing from the bottom surface into the body of the platform, for accepting the one or more straps through at least two of the slots for engaging the straps against the bearing members and for preventing the straps from engaging the surface.



***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watson in view of U.S. Patent 6,178,666 to Kiniry et al. hereinafter, Kiniry. Watson discloses the claimed invention except for the limitations of the top surface and the bottom surface of the platform having a slip resistant material. Kiniry teaches an apparatus (10) capable of supporting one or more straps, a planar platform having a body and cooperating with the straps, a planar top surface, a planar bottom surface, and wherein the planar top and bottom surfaces includes a slip resistance material, i.e., the material of the apparatus is a thermosetting, polyurethane elastomer (Col. 2, lines 33ff), which is generally known to be slip resistant. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the material of the apparatus in Watson to have included the material as taught by Kiniry for

the purpose of providing a means for preventing unwanted slipping of the article supported on The platform and between the surface and the apparatus.

***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed April 21, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that element 20 (curved lip) in Watson is used as a means for gripping the son or ice-covered terrain, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anita M. King whose telephone number is (571) 272-6817. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. Allen Shriver can be reached on (571) 272-6698. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Anita M. King/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3632

August 11, 2008